

American Campaign Medal, The Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal, the Honorable Service Lapel Button and the Honorable Discharge Lapel Pin. Eventually, his journey led him back to San Antonio where he worked in civil service for 25 years at Kelly Air Force Base.

Madam Speaker, I am thankful to have known such a remarkable person who dedicated himself to service and family. Although I am deeply saddened by his loss, I am comforted by knowing that his memory will live on though his many loved ones.

HONORING THE LEGACY OF THE TABERNACLE BAPTIST CHURCH IN WEST PALM BEACH

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 21, 2020

Mr. HASTINGS. Madam Speaker, it is my distinct honor to recognize the legacy of the Tabernacle Baptist Church, a historically black church located in West Palm Beach, Florida. The Tabernacle Baptist Church was established in 1893, before the creation of the town of West Palm Beach in 1894. The Church has proven to be a pillar and haven in the community throughout its 127-year history and continues to maintain its strong presence today.

The Church's leadership through various projects, such as the establishment of the U.B. Kinsey Educational and Community Center, and the Rosemary Village Construction Project, illustrates a dedication to a holistic, community-driven mission. The Church has also created the first school for African American children in Palm Beach County and continues to champion education through programs such as their scholarship committee. Throughout the years, the Church has remained a steadfast spiritual guide and support and strives to strengthen its presence in order to better serve Palm Beach County.

Under the leadership of Rev. Gerald D. Kisner, Pastor of Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church for the past 23 years; Reverend Kevin L. Jones, Assistant Pastor of Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church and the Church's Minister for Youth and Young Adults; and Ms. Gwendolyn Ferguson, Executive Assistant of the Church, they have carried the mission of the Church to serve as God's witnesses or ambassadors to people who are in need, through discipleship, outreach, teaching, preaching, community development, praise and worship.

Madam Speaker, the Tabernacle Baptist Church is indeed an exemplary part of our community. I extend my warmest congratulations to the Church for its contributions over these 127 years and wish them many more years of continued success.

CONGRATULATING STAFF SERGEANT DANIEL ACOSTA ON BEING NAMED THE HOMES FOR HEROES—HERO OF THE MONTH

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 21, 2020

Mr. FOSTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Staff Sergeant Daniel Acosta

on being named the Homes for Heroes—Hero of the Month.

A citizen of Joliet, Staff Sergeant Acosta served as an explosive ordinance disposal technician in the United States Air Force from 2002 to 2009. While serving in Iraq in 2006, he sustained serious injuries from an improvised explosive device. He was later awarded the Purple Heart by Brigadier General Frank Gorenc.

Today, Staff Sergeant Acosta is a veteran service officer working as a senior caseworker with the Will County Veterans Assistance Program and is on advisory boards for other non-profit organizations such as the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes and Tee it Up for the Troops. He is also a board member for Adaptive Adventures, an organization dedicated to providing outdoor sports opportunities to people with physical disabilities and their families. I commend him for his service to our great nation.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing the service and sacrifice of Staff Sergeant Daniel Acosta. His service and sacrifice for this country are truly honorable.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER WELCH

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 21, 2020

Mr. WELCH. Madam Speaker, because of my attendance at a Vermont memorial service to give the eulogy for a friend and prominent Vermonter, I was unable to vote on Roll Call 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, and 70. Had I been present, I would have voted: Roll Call 60: "Aye"; Roll Call 61: "Nay"; Roll Call 62: "Nay"; Roll Call 63: "Aye"; Roll Call 64: "Nay"; Roll Call 65: "Nay"; Roll Call 66: "Aye"; Roll Call 67: "Nay"; Roll Call 68: "Nay"; Roll Call 69: "Aye"; and Roll Call 70: "Aye".

CELEBRATING ESMERALDA LONGORIA GARCIA

HON. SYLVIA R. GARCIA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 21, 2020

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Madam Speaker, Esmeralda Longoria Garcia will be a centenarian on February 24, 2020 and her family will celebrate this milestone on Saturday February 22, 2020 at her home.

She was born on February 24, 1920 in Alice, Texas to her parents Leonardo Longoria and Luisa Lopez Longoria and raised in Sarita, Texas. She attended first grade in Sarita, and her father took her to school on horseback. From second to twelfth grade she went to school in the Alice Independent School District. She spent 9 months with her uncle Julian Gomez to attend school and spent her summers with her parents in Sarita.

She attended Texas College of Arts and Industries in Kingsville, now known as Texas A&M University Kingsville.

She taught elementary school at Kingsville ISD her first year from 1946 to 1947. She

taught in three different elementary grades in three different schools—Nayer, Saenz, and Mary R. Garcia—in the Alice Independent School District from 1947 to 1981.

She retired with 35 years of dedicated service as a teacher.

She married Alberto Arambula Garcia from Palito Blanco, and they lived in Alice, Texas. They had one son, Alberto Garcia Jr., two grandchildren, Victoria and Bryan Garcia, and two great grandchildren, Mila Jo and Rowen.

She has been a member of the Beta Pi Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma for 57 years and a member of Tri-County Retired Teachers Association since 1981.

Congresswoman SYLVIA R. GARCIA proclaims, "Tia Mere, you have a heart of gold, a century of experiences and wisdom, and you are by far the most extraordinary person I have ever known."

IN SUPPORT OF H.R. 5273 SECURING AMERICA'S PORTS ACT

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, February 21, 2020

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, as a senior member of the Committee on Homeland Security, I rise in strong support of H.R. 5273, the "Securing America's Ports Act."

I voted for H.R. 5273 because it secures America's land ports of entry along the border by increasing the rate of expeditious scanning of commercial and passenger vehicles entering the United States.

But Madam Speaker, this bill does more than just secure the border.

H.R. 5273 also encourages the continuation of cross-cultural interactions through tourism and trade across an increasingly secure border and encourages the rich diversity of interactions and cooperation between the United States and Mexico as well as ensures mutual economic success.

As many of you know, Texas shares the longest border with Mexico of any states in the Union at 1,254 miles.

Over time, the southwest region of the country has become the largest manufacturing corridor in the world.

In 2019, it was estimated that two-way trade between the United States and Mexico surpassed \$600 billion.

Trade between Texas and Mexico alone was approximately \$200 billion each year.

In fact, in a single day, more than one million people come and go across the border, along with 300,000 vehicles and over 75,000 trucks.

This magnitude of crossings at the border demands our attention.

Customs and Border Protection (CBP) uses these systems to inspect contents of commercial and passenger vehicles for potential contraband, such as drugs, without physically opening or unloading the vehicles.

My congressional district is home to one of the most racially and culturally diverse communities in the United States.

In the 18th Congressional District of Texas, 39.1 percent of people identify as Hispanic or Latino, 39.9 percent identify as Black or African American, and 45.4 percent identify as White.

Throughout my time in Congress, I have sought to propose and support legislation that increases the efficiency of operations at the border in addition to encouraging trade for the economic betterment of Texans.

For example, I supported H.R. 4940, the Border and Port Security Act, which prioritized improving the level of efficiency at the border by requiring the U.S. Customs and Border Protection to hire, train, and assign at least 500 new officers.

By adding qualified CBP agents, H.R. 4940 would help resolve CBP's understaffing crisis and efficiently address not only the high volumes of commercial and passenger vehicles that cross the border every day but also the seasonal surges that leave our CBP officers overwhelmed.

Today, the Securing America's Ports Act is building on previous initiatives like H.R. 4940 and improving the processes at our border.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 5273 understands and acts upon the nuances between the need to secure the border and achieve safety and security while also promote the robust exchange of goods, services, people, and ideas that we have enjoyed and profited from for years.

I ask all members to join me in voting for H.R. 5273, the Securing America's Ports Act.